

# Top tips for successful co-parenting

over the festive season

Christmas is notoriously difficult for families who are no longer living together. It can become a time of dread and fear. With a bit of planning, it does not have to be this way. Here is our Christmas list of tips to help you ensure that the holiday period is as harmonious as possible.

## 1. Children

Put your children first. Consider what is best for your children over the holiday period. It is a common misconception that parents have a right to see and spend time with their children, but the law states that it is in fact the child's rights that will be considered should legal action be required to reach an agreement.

## 2. Relatives

Children may want to see relatives who are special to them over the holiday period too. Factor the needs of relatives, into your holiday arrangements if you can.

## 3. Presents

Like it or not Christmas ultimately means one most important thing to children – presents! Wherever possible talk or communicate with one another about Christmas presents and consider whether a joint present might be appropriate. Consult with them and either set budget guidelines or share the cost.

## 4. Talking

Communication is the key to success. Even though it may be hard, try to keep channels of communication open with your ex-partner.

## 5. Manage expectations

The first Christmas after a separation or divorce can be a confusing and a difficult time for everyone. Try your best to manage expectations so that everyone, particularly your children, know what to expect.

## 6. Agree arrangements

Agree arrangements as far ahead as possible and try to be flexible for the sake of your children. Once you have agreed arrangements, try to keep to them.

## 7. Sharing

You and your partner will want to spend as much time as possible with your children over the festive season. Try to view things from the point of view of the children, rather than thinking about what you want.

## 8. Make the most of your time together

It can be upsetting not being able to spend time with your children on Christmas Day, but if you get it right, you and the children can thoroughly enjoy having two days to celebrate.

**Lawyers can do a lot to help parents who cannot agree arrangements for the festive period to help to resolve these differences through mediation, negotiation or, if absolutely necessary, the court. If you would like further information in relation to children matters or family law generally, please contact one of our family solicitors at Debenhams Ottaway.**



**For more information or advice please contact**

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